



CITY OF COLUMBIA
SOUTH CAROLINA
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

July 2, 2003

The Honorable Ernest Hollings
United States Senate
Washington DC 20510-4002

VIA FACSIMILE: 202-224-4293

Dear Senator Hollings:

I am writing to thank you for introducing S.1313 seeking designation of the Congaree Swamp National Monument as the Congaree National Park. The City of Columbia offers our strong support for this legislation.

As you know, the Congaree Swamp is the finest remaining example of an old-growth southern hardwood forest in North America. It contains a variety of rare ecological, geological, archeological, scenic and historic components. It serves as a habitat for more than 700 species of plants, 173 species of birds, 51 kinds of reptiles and amphibians and 53 species of fish. There are 10 species of rare plants and several national and state record trees. Having the Congaree Swamp designated as a national park would enhance our efforts to entice new businesses to locate in and around Columbia and would encourage nature based tourism in our area. The expansion of the Congaree Swamp will allow for the protection of a large bottomland floodplain and the vortex of the eastern flyway for hundreds of species of birds.

While the State of South Carolina has several national monuments within our boundaries, we do not have the privilege of having a national park. The City of Columbia supports and encourages your interest in making the Congaree National Monument the nation's 55th national park. Thank you for your consideration of this important project.

Very truly yours,

Robert D. Coble
Mayor

ROBERT D. COBLE, MAYOR